

MONTANA SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ROLL CALL

DATE 2-6-07

NAMES	PRESENT	ABSENT	EXCUSED
SEN. JOHN ESP (R)	✓		
SEN. KELLY GEBHARDT (R)	✓		
SEN. BOB HAWKS (D)	✓		
SEN. CAROL JUNEAU (D)	✓		
SEN. RICK LAIBLE (R)	✓		
SEN. LYNDA MOSS (D)	✓		
SEN. TERRY MURPHY (R)	✓		
SEN. JERRY O'NEIL (R)		✓	
SEN. MITCH TROPILA (D)	✓		
SEN. CAROL WILLIAMS (D)			✓
SEN. KIM GILLAN (D) - CHR	✓		
LEANNE HEISEL - LSD	✓		
MARI SCHREINER - SECRETARY	✓		

**MONTANA STATE SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE**

VISITOR REGISTER

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DATE FEB 6, 2007

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 284

PLEASE PRINT

NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
Ed CARTLETT	443-6820	TRAVEL INDUSTRY ASSOC.	SB284	X	
WILE SCHULTZ	995-4191	MONT. TRAVEL INDUSTRY	SB284	X	
PATTY BOYLE	455-1260	CM Russell Museum-G.F.	SB284	X	
SARA BECKER	727-8787	CM RUSSELL MUSEUM	SB284	X	
Rebin Hoover	556-8650	Yellowstone Country MT	SB284	X	
John Wilcox	245-6341	YELLOWSTONE COUNTRY	SB284	X	
Marti Baga	457-5500	MT Inn keeper Assoc	SB284	X	
Carol Zickler	457-5500	" " "	SB284	X	
John Brewer	869-3700	Billings Chamber	SB284	X	
Pete Carparelli	439-0679	myself	SB345	X	
JANE HAMMAN	933-8203	AAA Mountain West	SB284	X	
Mary Jane Charles	726-4289	Confederated Salish & Kootenai Tribes	SB284	X	
Sweeney Michael	205-5156	MTT A	SB284	X	
LATONKSHA HOWARD	726-4289	SALISH & KOOTENAI TRIBES		X	
Jan Melumaku	962-3390	Whitefish CVB	SB284	X	
ED DESROSIER	226-9220	SunTours "GLACIER"	SP384	Y	
Bruce Haller	862-8113	Roller Rent A Car	SB284	Y	
Darwin Stoveman	888-5454	Glacier Raft Co	SB284	X	
RANDY M'INTYRE	889-4636	Eureka CHAMBER of Commerce	SB284	X	
Tim Hunt	656-7889	Wendt Adv.	SB284	X	
Jim SCHAEFER	346-1876	CUSTER COUNTRY	SB284	X	

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

**MONTANA STATE SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE**

VISITOR REGISTER

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DATE 2-6-07

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 345

PLEASE PRINT

NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
ANA PERCHER	579-0143	MEIC	SB 345	✓	
Tommy Dwyer	258-6306	First Family	SB 345		X
Betty G. Dohman	431-8300	Carbon County Auto Guild	SB 284	X	
Hal Harper		Gov office	SB 345	Y	
Stan Frieser	439-2705	Representative of S	345	X	
Larry Peterman	444-9817	FWP	SB 345	X	
Ric Smith	471-0377	Self/Real Estate Agent	SB 345	X	
Mary Lou Hauck	273-2103	Self	SB 345		X
John Hauck	273-2103	Self	SB 345		X
Steve Pitcher	457-4126	MT Stock Growers	SB 345		X
Rhonda Sloan	475-3139	Homeowner	SB 345		
Bill Pierce	492-7261	CITIZEN	SB 345		✓
CHIP PILMAN	363-3000	CITIZEN	SB 345		X
Josie Ennis	743-1340	CITIZEN	SB 345		X
ELLEN ENGSTEDT	431-9792	MT Wood Prod. Assn.	SB 345		X
Kathleen Dussan	363-4236	Citi. 2nd	SB 345	X	
MARK BURCHAM	799-7077	GRANT FALLS BUILDERS	SB 345		X
McH Clifford	542-0539	Clerk Fork Coalition	SB 345	X	
Tom Murray	581-1860	PODOUT FILLERS	SB 345	X	
Harold Hattie	4-4360	MAEC	SB 345		X
LANE AYLOR	431-1013	Self	SB 345		X

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**MONTANA STATE SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE**

VISITOR REGISTER

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DATE Feb 6
BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 345 / 284
PLEASE PRINT

NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
Taron Todhunter	253-3807	MLA	345		X
Lillian Osterborg	554-3484	Farm Bureau	345		X
Joe Chetaniens	572-3241	Bozorka Co	284	X	
RITA KRISTIAENS	472-3241	Russell County Board	284	X	
Richard Parks	848-7314	APRC	345	X	
Kathie Laprevic	837-6211	Glacier County	284	X	
John Hill	802-59411	Five Star Rental	284	X	
Sandra Thores	453-9033	MLA	285	X	
Tina Pastorek	455-1000	Holiday Inn Express	284	X	
BRENDA PETERSEN	454-8500	Wendy	284	X	
Holly Tucker	454-8520	Wendy	284	X	
Paula Miller	832-6211	Glacier County	284	X	
THONDA FRIZZARAO	862-3440	WHITE SUL CUB	284	X	
Sarah Bannon	846-1943	Goldwest Country	284	X	
Carl Kochman	558-9141	Montana Chamber of Commerce	284	X	
Gaule Fisher	761-5036	Russell County	284	X	
JEFF WILCOX	586-2230	Mercury Advertising	284	X	
PAUL BOYD	587-1440	Cal Self	284	X	
Ronda Wiggers	899-5059	Grt Fls & Helena Club	284	X	
BARBARA NEILAN	532-3250	MISSOULA CUB	284	X	
Dori Mehlhoff	756-9091	Plathead CUB	284	X	

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**MONTANA STATE SENATE
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BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 284 & 345

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NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
Sara Rowe	593-4520	Butte CVB / myself	284	X	
BARB REITER	225-4339	Boulder Hot Springs/SA	284	X	
Marne Hayes	995-3000	Big Sky CVB	284	X	
JAMIE HED	922-2283	MUSKOGEE	284	X	
Beverly Ackerman	557-2865	Yellowstone River Country	284	X	
Carla Hunsley	653-1319	Missouri River Country	284	X	
Marilyn Polich	494-6666	Copper King Hotel	284	X	
Suzanne Taveler	541-2263	Parkway Cruise	284	X	
Cheryl Weaver	761-4434	Great Falls Chamber	284	X	
Mardian Ostella	646-7844	Yellowstone Chamber	284	X	
Jonathan Steltz	465-2245	Pendray	284	X	
Michael Morrison	453-7813	Gr Falls	284	X	
Howard Boggs	656-9961	Billings 55102	284	X	
Karlee Smith	443-0270	Clancy - self	284	X	
Mark Browning	234-3771	CUSTER CO. AIRPORT	284	X	
Mary Oliver	682-5915	SWMT business comm	284	X	
Vicki Huckle	457-9127		284	X	
Laurie Price	868-9844	Hampton Inn Great Falls	284	X	
Bob Gertl	258-6273	Gertl Family	345		X
Jim Kuvig	585-8714	Brewer	345	X	
Mike Murphy	275-4555	MWRA	345		X

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**MONTANA STATE SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE**

VISITOR REGISTER

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DATE Feb 6

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 345/284

PLEASE PRINT

NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
Mik Mitchell	591-2263	GLACIER COUNTY TOURISM	345 284	X	
Joan Harte	829-9306	MARS STOUT	284	X	
Donna Kaye Johnson	728-6205	MARS STOUT	284	X	
Ramona Holt	273-6743	GLACIER COUNTY	284	X	
Beverly Fox	443-3581	MARE	SB 284	X	
Dipni Bingham	208-2389	MT Tribal Tourism Alliance	SB 284	X	
Jodi Heinrich	197-3307	Fairmont Hot Spring	SB 284	X	
STAN OLARK	228-9336	GLASGOW chamber	SB 284	X	
JOAN E Krowchuk	245-4111	Billings Chamber	SB 284	X	
Kara Grau	243-5107	ITRR	SB 284		
Mike Penfold	254-0884	Our Montana	"	X	
Ed Tinsley	447-8302	L+C County	345	X	
Phyllis Erck	829-3777	Bozeman Hilton	284	X	
BRETT Tusbury	580 3328	COLDWELL BANKER LLC	345	X	
Anna Christofanelli	209-1438		284	X	
PAUL ROBERTSON	333-4787	Yellowstone Valley Ranch	345	X	
Scott Bosse	556-2823	Greater Yellowstone Coalition	345	X	
JAR HOLT	961-3302	MONTANA WILDLIFE FED	345	X	
Scott Chenock	458-0221	MWF	345	X	
Kevin Christofanelli	209-1437		284	X	
JOHN SHERVE	880-3240	JOHN + LAURIE SHERVE	345		X

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

**MONTANA STATE SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE**

VISITOR REGISTER

PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY

DATE _____

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 284

PLEASE PRINT

NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
Junda McCarthy	543-4238	Missoula Downtown Assoc	SB 284	✓	
Jisha Pedalero	406-721-5146	Southgate Mall	SB 284	✓	
Amber Dart	406-542-2311	Thrifty Rent a Car	SB 284	✓	
Jay Robson	" "	MT Car Rental Assoc	284	✓	
Lucy Wheeler	406-543-0720	Montana Innkeepers	SB 284	✓	
Malay Taylor	406-542-2311	Dollar Rent a Car	SB 284		
Mary Eickstein	" 532-3351	Brocade Inn	"	✓	
Kat Newkum	363-4226	B. H. & N. County Fair	SB 345	✓	
Tom Morley	406-581-1846	PROUD PROUD	SB 345	✓	
Tucker Hughes	566-2619	Russell County	SB 284	✓	
CHUCK HUNTER	202-2030	MT. CULTURAL ADVOCACY	SB 284	✓	
Chris Schweitz	431-2176	Bozeman & Kalispell Area	SB 284	✓	
John Laney	234-2890	Miles City Chamber	SB 284	✓	
Mike Mergenthaler	447-1941	HELEN CUB	SB 284	✓	
Cindy Andrews	586-1815	Breeman CUB	SB 284	✓	
Brian Griffin	855-5935	MT Retail & Rest Assoc	284	✓	✓
Arthur J. Smith	406-841-2708	Don't Comm			✓
Maquie Jensen	2-0230	MT Cultural Advocacy	284	✓	
J. Dwyer		EOV			✓
Jenna Sabatini	443-5800	Hampton Inn	284	✓	

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

LOCAL GOVERNMENT

DATE Feb 6

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 345

PLEASE PRINT

[illegible]

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**MONTANA STATE SENATE
2007 LEGISLATURE**

VISITOR REGISTER
LOCAL GOVERNMENT
~~PUBLIC HEALTH, WELFARE & SAFETY~~

DATE 2/6/07

BILLS BEING HEARD TODAY SB 345

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NAME	PHONE	REPRESENTING	BILL #	SUPPORT	OPPOSE
KARIN ROYD	587-1440	AGU	345	X	
ROXANN LINCOLN	442-8139	Prickly Pear Consulting	345	X	
Lynda Saul	461-2838	Gov Task Force Riparian Prot.	345	X	
LAURENCE SIROKY	444-6816	MT DARC	345	X	
Karl Christians	227-6867	Assoc. of MT Floodplain Managers	345	X	
Gail Abercrombie	459-1249	MT Contractors Assn	345		X
Glenn Oppel	443-4072	MT Reactors	345		X
CLINT M. BROWN	381-1676	H2O DESIGN GROUP, LLC	345		X
STEVE SKINNER	439-3782	SELF	345		X
ANDY SKINNER	439-0163	SELF	345		X
John Larson	475-3342	Self	345		X
Tim DAVIS	449-6086	MSGC	345	X	
Jack Cavanaugh	642-0548	Bitterroot Tree Un.	345	X	
Dustin Stewart	461-5506	MBTA	345		X
MARK AGUIRRE		MTM	345	X	
Edward Oluszul	777-1449	SELF	345		

PLEASE LEAVE PREPARED STATEMENT WITH COMMITTEE SECRETARY

Glacier Country Office

From: Jim Oliverson [jolive@krmc.org]
Sent: Tuesday, February 06, 2007 8:16 AM
To: glaciercountry@montana.com
Attachments: _AVG certification_.txt

Committee members

SB 284 could be as critical as a sophisticated piece of diagnostic equipment or an expensive pharmaceutical in the provision of healthcare to the citizens of Montana. Without healthcare workers to deliver the medications or conduct the tests we simply would not have healthcare. Tourism is one of our silent partners in healthcare because they expose potential employees to our small communities and larger towns.

I'm not certain if anyone has been able to build an accurate account of the indirect benefits of tourism to the healthcare industry, but I can share a personal experience that I believe would be echoed by many of my peers regarding an added value of tourism. I participate in 26 new employee orientation sessions every year. One of the questions I ask is how the new employee first heard of Kalispell Regional medical Center. In my March 19 session, two of our new RN's stated that they were vacationing in the area from their midwestern homes, fell in love with the people and the vistas and decided, as long as they were here, why not check out the local hospital and see what type of employment opportunities were available. Seven months later they were new employees

I'm not suggesting that tourism will solve the healthcare dilemma, but I am suggesting that benefits of tourism go far beyond the traditional views of motel beds, restaurants and bars. I would ask that you consider the "value added" of the tourism industry, such as a recruitment tool for physicians and healthcare workers as you consider this critical bill. I am absolutely convinced that similar stories from scores of unrelated businesses exist across Montana.

Thank You for Your Time and Attention

Jim Oliverson, Vice President
Kalispell Regional Medical Center



HOCKADAY MUSEUM *of* ART

302 Second Avenue East, Kalispell, MT 59901
(406) 755-5268 (406) 755-2023 fax
information@hockadaymuseum.org www.hockadaymuseum.org

February 2, 2007

Montana State Legislators
Helena, MT 59620

RE: SB 284 Best Place First

Dear State Representatives:

I am writing to you to voice my support for the legislative bill SB 284 "Best Place First". This important legislation will greatly benefit the economic development across the state of Montana. Our tourism commissions and visitor bureaus are major assets to communities throughout Montana. They help many organizations preserve and restore the rich cultural and vast recreational heritage that is unique to Montana.

By directing a 3% accommodations tax and a 4% car rental tax toward the promotion of tourism, all Montana's stand to gain economically whether they are small or large business owners or they are retired and take part in the cultural and recreational offerings of the state. Economic development through tourism promotion is a smart business venture for the state to be involved with at every level. I urge you to vote for legislative bill SB 284 and make Montana the "Best Place First"!

Sincerely,

Linda Engh-Grady
Executive Director/Curator

Hockaday Museum of Art Board of Trustees

Executive Board

Fred Leistiko, President	Tabby Ivy, Vice-President	Dave Handy, Treasurer	Jane Wheeler, Secretary			
Margene Berry	Janet Clark	Ed Gilliland	Jana Goodman	Robert Lopp	Carol McSweeney	F.C. "Buz" Meyer
Dave Mihalic	Dick Solberg	Tom Waggoner III	Jackie Wildgen, Honorary Board Member			

Associate Directors

Donald Baughman	Janet Bierrum	Beth Collier	Wes Hines	Mark Norley	Nicholas Oberling	James Udick	Rae Ellen Zeits
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Bringing you the art and culture of Montana and the artists of Glacier National Park

February 5, 2007

RE: SB284 – Best Place First

FROM: Stevensville Main Street Association
102B Main Street
Stevensville, Montana 59870
“Establish 1841”

SUBJECT: REQUEST TO SUPPORT SENATE BILL NO. 284

This letter of support is to encourage you to vote for SB284.

Tourism in Montana is an industry providing many benefits to the State of Montana. The Tourism Industry benefits small towns such as ours as well as the larger populations of Montana. Tourism dollars benefit historic preservation, cultural investments and the very viability of small business in Montana.

The industry is huge for Montana. There are many towns in Montana rich in history with many scenic and historical attractions, but, due to their populations are unable to promote and preserve their locations without the assistance of larger entities such as those in the Travel Industry Association of Montana. We rely on Travel Montana, Montana Arts Council, Glacier Country, CVB's etc. to help us promote our portion of the industry.

It is critical for us to have the dollars in place to support the Tourism Industry of Montana. What other industry in Montana benefits so many and is a clean industry that enhances and preserves our environment, does not pollute or impede the State in anyway, but, brings dollars and investment to the “Best Place”.

Please support SB284.

Sincerely,
Joan Prather, Executive Director
Stevensville Main Street Association
P. O. Box 18
Stevensville, Montana 59870



February 5, 2007

Dear Senator or Representative,

The Conrad Mansion Museum would like to ask for your support of the "Best Place First" Bill (SB 284) which would revise the allocation of bed tax and taxes on rental cars.

SB 284 is a tourism plan to pass legislation that secures the future of the industry and the heritage of Montana. This bill would provide funding to CVB's, Travel Montana, the Arts Council, Heritage Commission, and Historical Properties. The Conrad Mansion Museum has received grant funding from the Travel Montana's Tourism Infrastructure Improvement Program to repair the roof and the electrical system and has received funding from Glacier Country's Cooperative Marketing Program. These organizations have proved to be essential in helping the Conrad Mansion continue to serve the community and visitors as an attraction and cultural institution in the Flathead Valley. We also partner with the local FCVB to reach visitors outside our state. Further investment in these organizations is additional investment in the states museums.

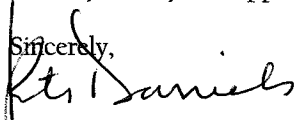
The Mansion provides economic impact to the area by maintaining authenticity and quality in both our attraction and our service. These attributes have earned the Mansion national media coverage. The home has been featured on A&E's television series *America's Castles* in a show highlighting pioneers, and has also been featured in the magazine *Country Victorian*. The Mansion hosted the Montana PBS show *Back Roads of Montana* last winter and was featured in *Flathead Living* and *Via* magazine this summer. Out of 65 episodes of the *America's Castle* series, only two shows won the first place "Telly" awards. "The Pioneers" was one of these two.

The Mansion strives to offer visitors a quality experience by combining sound interpretation with a memorable and rewarding tour. We offer guided tours as a means of adding a human touch. At the end of the tour, the same guide stays with visitors in the Gift shop where they are able to answer questions and further visit with people from the tour. By this time a rapport has been established and we are often asked to recommend restaurants or other attractions at this time. A large percentage of our visitors receive personal referrals to visit, indicating that our personable and dedicated guides make a difference.

Visitors desire to see a "Real America" when they travel. This is best done through architecture, cultural events, and historic interpretation and preservation. As one of three museums in Kalispell, the Conrad Mansion is vital in providing a strong presence for area cultural attraction. The structural health and aesthetic appeal of our museum not only impacts our local community, but our thousands of visitors across the country and foreign guests as well. The Conrad Mansion Museum offers a unique experience that is worth staying in Kalispell for an extra afternoon.

The "Best Place First" Bill supports arts and culture in Montana and the Conrad Mansion Museum. SB 284 would make Montana's tourism marketing more competitive and help attract more visitors to our area. If Montana's number of visitors flattens or declines, not only is that bad news for Montana's economy (at \$2.7 billion, tourism is one of the state's leading industries), it is also bad for Kalispell's museums.

Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Kate Daniels
Executive Director

P.O. BOX 1041, KALISPELL, MT 59903 ■ PHONE: 406-755-2166

The Conrad Mansion was built in 1895 as the home of C.E. Conrad, Montana pioneer, Missouri River trader, freighter, and founder of the city of Kalispell. Restored to its original elegance, it is placed on the National Historic Register and open to visitors from May to October.

My name is Randy McIntyre, I am the Executive Director of the Eureka Area Chamber of Commerce in Eureka, MT, also the President of the Lincoln County Tourism Board, I am an Active member of the TVCDC, which is the Tobacco Valley Community Development Council, chairperson of the TVCDC Tourism Council, and Chairperson of the TVCDC Planning Board. I work with the Tobacco Valley Improvement Association, the Board of History and the Board of Arts.

This Bill is critical to the growth of tourism in the State of Montana, Lincoln County, Montana and most importantly to me, The Tobacco Valley in North Lincoln County, Montana.

The Tobacco Valley is historically a Timber Based economy. However with the closing of our largest mill a year ago, and the continued shutting down of timber sales, reductions in Forest Service Personal in our area, Tourism is fast becoming our number 1 resource.

In 2003

The 1998 Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research shows that:

~~That only 5% of the state travelers went through the Tobacco Valley~~
67% of the residents of the Tobacco Valley agree tourism promotions & advertising to out-of-state visitors is crucial.

53% believe tourism will help the community grow

62% feel the Tobacco Valley is a good place for tourism investment

And 60% of the Tobacco Valley Residents feel tourism promotion will benefit not only the local community economically, but all of Lincoln County, and Montana.

This is proof that the majority of the Tobacco Valley and Lincoln County Residents support Tourism.

This Bill is critical to Tobacco Valley Tourism, *as well as the state of MT.*

According to the Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research, 1998 non residents Hwy Segment Analysis, Eureka only had 5% of the non-resident traffic in the state, since that time, Roseville Port has become a designated port of entry into the United States

The following figures are from the US Customs on passenger crossing the Canadian Border into Montana on HWY 93:

Jan 2005	16,375
Feb 2005	18,668
Mar 2005	19,179
Apr 2005	20,090
May 2005	22,942
June 2005	26,301

*In 2003
the ITRR
Did a Tourist
Analysis in the
Tobacco Valley
IT showed*

July 2005

45,489

These growing numbers are proof that tourism is fast becoming the main stay for the Tobacco Valley and Lincoln County. It is critical that Montana Tourism has the funding to continue to become a leader in tourism. The State of Montana, Lincoln County, and the Tobacco Valley are in competition with countries such as Australia, New Zealand, and Switzerland for the international tourism market, and we need to promote it with every available dollar we can.

This 3% equals \$1 million ^{to Glacier.} to promote our fast growing, and soon to be # one resource, Tourism. Please make sure that Montana has every dollar available to become a contender in the International tourism market place.

My family gets tired of me always turning to movies to stress a point, but here goes anyway. "Build it and they will come"

SENATE BILL 284 – BEST PLACE FIRST
Testimony February 6, 2007 – Linda J. Anderson

Good afternoon Chairman and members of Senate Local Government Committee.

My Name is Linda J. Anderson – Haines, I am Executive Director of Glacier Country Regional Tourism Commission and represent the 8 western counties of Flathead, Glacier, Lake, Lincoln, Mineral, Missoula, Ravalli and Sanders. Today I am here on behalf of Montana's 5 other regions – Custer, Gold West Country, Missouri River Country, Russell Country, Yellowstone Country and our 13 Convention and Visitors Bureaus. We are here in support of Senate Bill 284 – Best Place First.

This is an important bill to the tourism industry as well as the rest of the State of Montana.

Without additional funding for the tourism industry, in Montana, other destinations with big names – Las Vegas, California, Florida, Disney Land, etc., have much to gain – our visitors. Our industry and our partners can affect Montana's economy in a relatively short amount of time. We can create a bump in the economy. We can strengthen all regions in Montana and affect large and small town and cities.

There are plenty of reasons for people to come to Montana. All we have to do is invite them in a compelling way but that costs money.

Every region, CVB, city, town, attraction, state park, museum, theatre, and rafting company, ski area, especially main street Montana has a stake in seeing Montana succeed.

We can influence the economy by focusing on shoulder season business (spring and fall) by targeting more meetings and conventions. This is vital to all of our Convention and Visitors Bureaus.

Without more funding, we as a state drop further and further behind other states, especially our surrounding states. We want to lift Montana higher on the list of desired destinations in the United States but we can't do it without more funding.

Although nearly everyone is a tourist at one time or another, usually many times over, and although it is sometimes hard to identify a county, city, or region in Montana, that does attract tourists, to the delight of local businesses, your constituents. The size and scale of travel and tourism in often not fully appreciated.

In each Region, CVB, state tourism office, through every advertising program, great ideas and grant programs, we strive to never to take our eyes off the prize of tourism – it is about jobs and economic development.

Jobs where workers can learn work maturity skills, jobs where they can establish their careers. Tourism and hospitality is an industry women have excelled at. I am an example of that.

Jobs where workers can become part of state, regional and national corporations and jobs where they are the sole proprietor. Showing up every morning to unlock the door and most importantly pay taxes to Montana.

I submit an article in Sunday, February 4's *Missoulian* about all of the various entities in Montana wanting money from the General Fund. Not one of these businesses says they will actually bring business to Montana to help put money back into the economy or the general fund. Tourism's Best Place First bill is setup to actually bring business to Montana especially small communities and cities and towns, Main Street Montana, as well as our other sense of place partners.

Travel and Tourism has a huge, but often little known impact on our economy, but its potential economic impact could be ever greater by making a difference annually supporting operational and maintenance needs of many organizations, allow Regions and CVB's to bring more targeted business in the shoulder seasons, and create jobs to support our families and provide Montana additional tax revenues.

And finally, important because it gives on going annual support for preservation of our states historical and recreational assets while supporting cultural enjoyment and a more secure economic environment.

Page 3

We appreciate this opportunity to present these ideas and will be happy to answer any questions or provide further information.

Thank you.

406.837-6211
Cell 406-250-3113

February 5, 2007

RE: SB284 – Best Place First

FROM: Stevensville Main Street Association
102B Main Street
Stevensville, Montana 59870
“Establish 1841”

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Please support SB284.

Sincerely,
Joan Prather, Executive Director
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Stevensville, Montana 59870